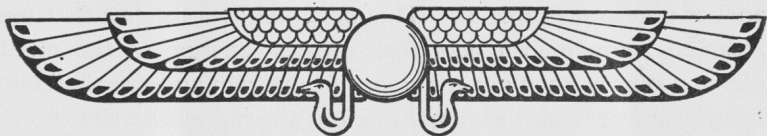


"Point out the 'Way'—However dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness."



MERCURY.

EDITORIAL + STAFF:

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THE BEAUTY OF SILENCE.

HOW could weary mortals bear the burdens of life, if it were not for rest in the silence? Through periods of solemn stillness the blessed dew of Peace cools the throbbing hearts of the children of men. When evening ends the daily work amid the clangor of activities demanded by humanity's outcries for bread, the toiler seeks the home, and retires to the privacy of his own room; there, as noiselessly as a mother nestles a fretful child, the soft silence soothes the strained nerves until they are enfolded in the deeper hush of sleep.

Nature's grandest tones are uttered in soundless beauty. When the windless Winter sky droops over rigid furrows of water, and the aspiring spray is woven into lace for the Ice-king's mantle, this white silence appeals to man more powerfully than the boom of the breakers. Many a solitary traveler, awed by the majesty of lone mountain peaks, or oppressed by the wide solitude of virgin plains, will put forth all the volume of his lungs in one loud cry—a puny human protest against the heavy spell of silence.

Some of this same Nature-magic belongs to the individual who has learned the value of silence. He whose words are guarded commands the confidence of his fellow-men. Is not mute dignity the loudest defender against slander? and many common proverbs

tend to show that an angry opponent will cease to storm at a citadel of unresponsive calm. This demonstrates the law that force reserved from speech acts with greater energy on the mental plane. Words knock at the door of the brain and are challenged before they are granted admission, but the power of silent thought leaps over the barriers of the personality, and conveys the idea directly to the subjective mind. Thus the thought-form enters so gently through the channels of the least resistance, that the recipient often hails the transplanted conception as original. This mental power is the secret of the success of great statesmen and leaders of the people.

By this same medium the mind of the world is unconsciously enriched with visions of the True and the Beautiful conceived and born in the silence of some dreamer's inspiration. O, the pathos of these dumb souls! Sadder than the yearning for utterance in the eyes of a humanized brute is the look in the face of some shabby, bent figure, jostled against in the street: only a glance, but it reveals a life of grinding pain and effort, until Karma's iron hand shall round the character into a fit vehicle for the dormant spirit behind the windows of the soul. O, the pity of those songless poets of the human race, who soar on wings of light through the Empyrean, yet have no tongue to tell the rapture!

Silence is the mother of speech. The full meaning of the works of great masters in literature is only grasped when the proper intervals are made, and such pauses reveal the beauty of the ideal as truly as the rythmical utterances. Quiet times give the moment of power to the teacher or the orator. A harvest of ripe thoughts is garnered behind closed lips, and when the gates of speech are lifted up, like a King of Glory, the Word of Life will issue forth. The closest sympathy of friendship creeps through hours of silent companionship, when eye speaks to eye and soul to soul; then are created the invisible arteries linking heart to heart with Love's own blood through the long silences of distance and of years, and which pulsate in immortal strength across the deeper silence men call Death.

There is an interior region in man, the plane of Manas, or mind where more is required than the absence of audible sounds to form the silent chapel where the soul may breathe its daily ves-

pers. The Eastern sage Patanjali, must be obeyed, and one must succeed in "hindering the modifications of the thinking principle." It is not sufficient, in the language of Christ, to "enter into thy closet;" when this is done the command is, "shut thy door." These two precepts mean that the clamorous thought-images of trivial cares, of belittling personalities, and the jingling of some reiterating argument must all be swept out of the upper chamber of the mind, before the consciousness can expand itself in prayer. In this silence, twice removed from the haunting strains of earth, the voice of the Individuality, the Higher Manas, will solve the burning queries of the aspirant. The understanding will there learn by direct cognition the nature of those Absolute Laws that alike govern the Universe and the evolution of mankind. Filled with the might of Truth, the disciple will bring out of this fair silence the power to strike the key-note of divine harmony and still the jarring discords of the world.

All who enter this path of purification experience periods of vital depression, mental dullness and apathy of will. These apparent retrogressions are recognized by occultists as a universal karmic necessity. They are a phase of the beneficent ministry of silence, holding the lower nature in abeyance. It is a comfort at such times to remember the saying: "Grow as the flower grows." So through the stillness of this unconscious night the soul is really putting forth buds that patiently await the auroral music of the eastern Sun to fling the perfume of attainment upon the winds of heaven.

Like a blind worshiper in an empty church, the mind may eagerly listen for weeks, or months, or even years for the "Let us pray" of the Spirit, not perceiving that the priest has withdrawn into the silence of the Holy of Holies. When the rays of the Higher Self return, the void will be filled with great sounding waves of Glorias and Te Deums.

Concentration unlocks the door of another mystic sanctuary of silence. The four-leaved lotus of the heart is the real occult chamber, opening its central window to light from above, where the dross of earthliness is transmuted into the Gold of Divinity. There "look for the flower to bloom in the silence that follows the storm."* After the first great battle is won, and the victor

*Light on the Path, rule 21.

rests in this stronghold of Peace, then "in the deep silence the mysterious event will occur which will prove that the way has been found."† An old axiom bids us "sink the consciousness to the heart" to enter the abode of the World's Mother, the fiery power, Kundalini. When the heart of the neophyte is anointed with the oil of consecration the organ of intuition will dilate, and illumine the thinking principle; as it is written, "From the heart that Power shall rise into the sixth, the middle region, the place between thine eyes, when it becomes the breath of the ONE SOUL, the voice which filleth all, thy Master's voice."‡ For not on the frozen heights of Himalaya, not in the virgin stillness of the desert, not in the pathless jungles of India, but in the silent vastness of the heart of man vibrates the soundless OM of the soul's initiations.

When one flees to the country, away from the roar of the city, where human sobs and moans unite with the crash and rattle of man's handiwork in one great battle-tone of Life, at first the beautiful silence seems absolute; but, in time, the shrill peep of Summer insects, the low bird-calls, and the quivering of leaves in the hot sunlight, all mingle in the voiceless murmur of Nature's melody. In the same manner the various manifestations of the beauty of silence illustrate the truth that the quiescence of any plane is necessary before the vibrations of a finer essence may be heard.

This holds true when the hour strikes for some tired child of earth to slip into that profound silence which, at last, opens tender arms of welcome for us all. The clasped hand grows pale and nerveless; Life's farewell signal fades from the eyes, and the familiar tones sink to a whisper, a sigh, then peace. The living cry out in desolation. Can ever a sound pierce this awful silence? On the wings of the spirit comes the answer; that the longed-for message will never break on fleshly ear or carnal mind:

The veil of the temple must be rent
And the sheaths of the soul unroll,
Before the Ego yet linked to earth
May commune with the pain-freed soul.

This communing is possible to the occultist who still wears the

† Ibid. ‡ Voice of the Silence, book I, p. 9.

garment of matter, if he be pure enough to rise to the thought-realms of Devachan, or Heaven, On the faces of those who have burst the chrysalis of incarnation streams the Light from the East, pulsating with the rythm of Universal Life. Chords of this divine Harmony these risen souls send back on living strands of love to the inmost chamber of the beating heart of man, and from that king's crypt in the pyramid of world-experience the disciple sees the Star of Infinite Progression beckon him on from sound to sound, from glory to glory and from life to life unto rest in the great Silence of God, the Peace of Pralaya.

EDITH SEARS.

A BIBLE STUDY.

THE great exponent of Theosophy, H. P. B., established as an axiom, that all sacred, mystic lore must be read with the help of seven keys, if one wants to obtain their true and entire meaning. This axiom has been proven in numberless passages of the "Secret Doctrine," and elsewhere, to apply to the Christian Bible just as much as to any other occult writings, and the Jews, the former owners of that book, and who ought to know, readily acknowledge at least four interpretations. (S. D. I. 374, also 312.) Therefore it would seem that the object of every true Christian ought to be to reach the inner spirit of that sacred Scripture. Yet the greatest fanatics amongst Christian believers are precisely those who cling to the outside form, and to that alone, to the literal, dead-letter text—what Hebrews contemptuously call the *Pashut*—and they sanctify it, intolerantly repudiating as sacrilegious the idea that several meanings may be hidden under those dead husks.

Now, in connection with this intellectual bondage to literal texts, even if it were established that only one interpretation can be given to the words, another important point for the believer would be that concerning the genuiness, the correctness of those texts, after they have undergone the process of translation from the original dead language into the many modern tongues. The various English versions, have been accused of being full of glaring mistakes and blunders, especially so the "authorized" or "James" translation made (1611) by forty-seven so-called Divines, none of

whom had more than what has been justly characterized as a most "infantile" knowledge of Hebrew, a most "astonishing unfamiliarity" with its genius. Strange to say, however, the fact of such errors existing in the text-book of the Christian religion, has been established beyond doubt, without apparently shaking the confidence and narrow-views of the ordinary believers in and followers of the dead-letter, while certainly no intelligent, thinking man can be expected to concede any authority to it or have any faith unto its tenets unless, certain of a scientifically exact translation, obtained through scholars in possession of the *full* correct meaning of the original.

But here again, there is not even unanimity about the nature of that original: the three most ancient versions of the Pentateuch—the Hebrew, the Samaritan and the Septuagint, together with the next three Greek versions, (Aquila, Theodotion and Symmachus) and the Syriac one—vary considerably in many of their statements; for instance, in the matter of the ages of many of the Patriarchs at the birth of their sons, so wide is the difference between the Hebrew and the Septuagint versions that their chronologies cannot be reconciled at all, the latter allowing a period of 800 years more than the former from Adam to Abraham, whereby it is impossible to arrive at any chronological concordance or even to a positive figure for the origin of the race (creation) or the time of the flood. This further leads to the fact, conceded by good authorities, that Usher's system*—the official one at present—"in no sense has ever been the true chronology of any known version of the Pentateuch," only the visionary efforts of a conceited man.

A further cause of uncertainty, even after admitting of a text being adopted as original, is the divergent "readings" found in its various extant copies, since "we have no autograph and no

*Usher's system allows only 200 years after the cessation of the flood for the growth of population in number, strength and knowledge which must have been requisite for such efforts as the building of the Great Tower, of the Pyramids and other cyclopean monuments and for the formation of such extensive and powerful empires as those of Chaldea, Nineveh, Babylon mentioned in the Bible and corroborated by archaeological discoveries, not to speak of Egypt, which, as Reclus says, had already existed as "a civilized power conscious of its own greatness at a period antecedent to the foundation of Babylon and Nineveh" (the earth, Egypt.) The shortness of this period is manifestly a most absurd presumption even in view of the simple arithmetical problem of how many descendants could possibly have issued in 200 years from the seven couples saved in the Ark.

perfect MSS of either Hebrew or Greek Scriptures" (Oxford Helps to the Study of the Bible.) Even the standard Masoretic Hebrew Text, which is not older than the ninth century of our Era, is itself far from infallible, since "in the Hebrew manuscripts that have been examined, some 80,000 various readings actually occur as to the Hebrew consonants; how many as to the vowel points and accents, no man knows" (Rev. Prof. Moses Stuart, Critical History and Defense of the Old Testament Canon, Andover, 1835, p. 192.) Who then can expect a positive, correct, mystical translation on such uncertain materials? and was, after all, the Roman Papal Church so absolutely unwarranted in prohibiting to her followers the reading of any translation whatever of the Bible? Yet, in the very face of all such serious elements of uncertainty, the Protestant Hierarchy boldly contend that "although the various reading in the MSS and printed editions of the Hebrew Bible are very numerous, they are *absolutely* UNIMPORTANT," (?) and that, while "there are many alterations in the LANGUAGE, yet none exist in the MEANING (!) of the original writers" (Oxford Helps.) Even if this happened to be correct, so far as the mere outside, apparent literal meaning is concerned—*i. e.*, when the first key, Pashut, alone is applied—who can be bold enough to assert that it so remains, when the six other keys are used? for the reason that, with these mystical keys, a vowel, an accent let alone a consonant, apparently "unimportant" for the vulgar, may quite reverse the occult signification. Then again, who, among the modern Church Dignitaries, could now, conscientiously, dare assume to know the full esoteric meaning of the old Hebrew writers?

The full bearing of all the above remarks came home to me all the stronger, a short while ago, as I happened to fall on a passage of Leviticus, which I consider offers a fair and clear example of the matter. It is one prescribing the ceremonial for the celebration of the great Feast of Tabernacles, in which every word might reasonably be expected to be symbolical and full of meaning. Now, here is the acknowledged version: xxiii:40: "And ye shall take you on the first day, the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees and willows of the brook, and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days. . ."

Now, I shall ask any impartial person, what does this jumble mean? what kind of things were the Jews ordered to take and what could possibly be the symbolism of those things? what are boughs of *goodly* trees and of *thick* trees, and why palms and willows? No slaves of the dead-letter version, unaided by any hint outside of this dead-letter, can give a reasonable explanation, so that even they must be obliged to admit that the above verse is certainly a sample of a very poor translation; if it be not a sufficient proof of the absolute incapacity of the James' translators, it must at least be accepted as one of their very insufficient knowledge in the botanical phraseology of the Hebrews, because, most assuredly, *goodly trees* and *thick trees* must have had some proper designation in the original.

Here then, if we turn to the Jewish commentaries, for making some sense of the above nonsense, we shall discover that the apparently incoherent ordinance was really imbued with deep meaning, as well it might have been expected. For instance, the TALMUD will tell us what the trees were and why they were chosen, although using only one key in the interpretation: "Ye shall take for yourselves, the fruit (not the boughs) of the tree 'Hadar,' Citron, ~~(4)~~ some 'Lulab' or palm branches, boughs of the thick-set 'Hadas' * or myrtle and 'Arabim' of the brook or willow." This reading is further corroborated in two places of Flavius Josephus' history of the Jews: (a) In Book III, chapter x, v. 4, which treats of the said feast of Tabernacles, it is said, "The law enjoins us (the Jews) * * that we should carry in our hands a branch of myrtle and willow, and a bough of palm tree with the addition of the pome-citron."

(b) In Book XIII, chapter xiii, v. 5, where Alexander son of Cleopatra and Governor of Judeah, on the occasion of his making a sacrifice on the altar, was pelted by the people with citrons, "which they had in their hands because the law required that at the Feast of Tabernacles everyone should have branches of palm and citrons."

It is then further explained that these offerings were chosen as symbolical of the four elements, the only ones out of the seven that were revealed to the people, among the Jews, because these elements "work under the direction and approval of the Most

* Esther's Hebrew name Haddassah suggests myrtle blossoms.

High, and without them all things would cease to exist;" therefore, "at the Feast of the Lord," together with their thanks, the Jews were ordered to "bring before Him these four symbolical species," the citron held in the left hand, the other three together in the right hand, intended for the following reminders:

The Citron, a "precious fruit" whose color is deep yellow, to symbolize *fire*; the Palm, a high tree, growing straight up in the air, with fruit sweet and agreeable to the taste, as symbol of the second element, *air*. With all the nations of Antiquity the palms were connected with ideas of victory and rejoicing; the Myrtle, a very common lowly shrub, consecrated to Venus by the Greeks and Romans, was fitly selected, on account of its thick growth close to the ground and of its cold and dry nature, to represent the third element, *earth*; the Willow of the brook, which elects to grow close to the water, dropping its branches into the stream, symbolized the last element, *water*.

Moreover, the citron had yet more meaning, and, just as, on general lines, the fruit is the complete, perfect, expression of vegetable life, so in the Jehovistic emblem, the citron was the perfect one among the four offerings, containing as it did within itself all that the others represented, *viz.* the outside skin, yellow, signifying fire; the inside skin, white and damp, air; the liquid pulp, water; and the seeds, dry and hard, earth, thereby also proclaiming the theosophical truth that fire was the origin of the other three elements and contained them all *in latu*. Thus, the citron was mentioned first and taken into the left hand, because the symbolism was, through it, complete in the weakest hand, while the right one, the strongest, held the other three, separate and more difficult to hold, though the two last boughs or twigs were generally tied to the palm.

Yet another meaning given to the citron by the celebrated Maimonides, in his "Moreh Nebuchim", (Guide of the Perplexed,) was that, together with the three boughs, it was a commemoration of the fact that Jehovah had brought the Israelites out of the wilderness, where no fruit grew and no people could live, into a land of brooklets, "flowing with milk and honey."

Then, again, these four emblems also represented the four principal members of the human body: the citron is shaped somewhat

like a heart, without which we could not live and with which man should serve his fellows; the palm branch represents the spine, foundation of the human frame and protector of the heart, thus signifying that we should serve God with our entire body. One of the peculiarities of the next emblem, the myrtle, is "the existence of a prominent vein running round the leaf, within the margin, making it resemble the eyelids," wherefore it was taken as the sign of the human eye, with which man sees the outside world, recognizes the deeds of his fellows and through which he may obtain a knowledge of the law; finally, the leaves of the willow figure the human lips that utter thanks to the Eternal. And while the element, water, comes before earth, yet the myrtle was mentioned *before* the willow, because man can see and know things before he is able to name them with his lips, he can look into the Bible before he can study the same. Then, with these four principal parts of the human body, which carry with them all the others, should man praise his Creator, as expressed by David, "All my bones shall say: O Lord, who is like unto Thee!"

Lastly, the four emblems being different in taste, appearance and odor, they recalled how the various sons of men are different in conduct and habit: the citron, a fruit good for food and exhaling a most pleasant perfume, may be compared to the intelligent man, righteous in his conduct towards God and his fellow-men, the odor of the fruit being his good deeds, and its substance, his learning on which others may feed; the palm branch bears fruit, but it is without odor, thus being compared to those people who are learned, but wanting in good deeds, they know the law, but transgress its mandates and their knowledge does not help others; the myrtle, with its pretty flowers and berries, but little useful to man, is compared to those people who are naturally good and act correctly towards God and fellow-man, but are uneducated; lastly, the willow of the brook, that has neither fruit nor odor, symbolizes, therefore, the people who have no knowledge and perform no good deeds. Yet the four emblems were necessary together; thus must all men—whatever may be their class and merits—join and unite to utter supplications and thanks to the Most High, who then will most surely hearken to their combined words.

Thus the Talmud gives us a rational wording of the prescrip-

tions of Lev. xxiii:40, and with it a satisfactory explanation of their reason and meaning, evidently unknown to James' Divines. This also goes to sustain the assertion that every word in the Bible, if properly understood, is full of symbolism. But it also affords a most lamentable proof of the unreliability of the English translations, and ought to lead the earnest thinker to this point, that, if the translators were so ignorant of Hebrew as not to be able to word properly a simple botanical enumeration, what authority and knowledge could they possess to enable them to grasp the true signification of the deep mystic, occult, philosophical, divine passages, which, in the Hebrew text, like in all other occult writings, must be—as they really are—veiled under the proper “double entendre” phraseology, in order to keep them sacred and preserve them from the desecration of the “vulgar.”

The matter then comes to this, it would seem, that if the Christians are determined to appropriate and make a law unto themselves of the religious book so-called Holy Bible, a book written, in their own tongue, by Jews for the use of the Israelites, and if the Christians really want to get at the true and right meaning of their adopted law, they ought to use it only in the original tongue, or at the very least, they ought to illumine their text and its versions, by the torch-light of the Jewish commentaries, Kabbalah and Talmud rightly understood. And no Christian who has not studied these two works, through their different keys, can boast of knowing and understanding his Bible—even if he be able to read it in the Hebrew original. Therefore, the fanatic worshiper of the dead-letter text alone, must inevitably wreck himself on the errors of whatever translation he uses, for, as it is said in the same book, “the spirit vivifies, the dead-letter killeth.” More than this, it can even be said that even Kabbalah and Talmud are insufficient to throw full light on the Christian Bible: Theosophy alone can help to reach the *seven* keys which are necessary for its ultimate correct comprehension. Theosophy is not a copy of the Kabbalah, as some of our meek Christian detractors do erroneously assert, but there is a good deal of pure Theosophy in the Kabbalah, and this work furnishes interesting reading to Theosophists; but Theosophy alone can make the student rectify the crude or curious notions found in all the Jewish sacred works,

which may appear incomprehensible or unreasonable, if not studied with due regard and allowance for the peculiar idiosyncracies of the peculiar people whom "Jehovah chose as his own," and for whom those works were written. A. MARQUES, F. T. S.

KSHANTI.

MEA, in very truth, there is a balm to heal thy wounded feet; to soothe thy aching limbs; but none may give it thee. Yet is it free to thy hand, to be gathered by the wayside as thou walkest. It lifts its tender leaves among the rocks and blooms in desolation—a plant of virtue for thy healing; and thou shalt know it by its fresh, green leaves, of Nature's velvet, smooth and round, with delicate tracery of veining set cross-wise on its stem. Its bloom is four petaled, snowy white, with just a blush within its cup. I have sought and found it oftenest where the flinty ground scarce offered pathway to my feet—where blood-drops marked each step.

They who know its virtues call it "Eye-bright," and the name is Sooth, for heavenly dew-drops gathered from its leaves make bright and clear the inward sight. Besides there is a magic virtue in its juices, which, when distilled, yields that which may transform whatever it is applied to—the hovel turns to palace, the bed of pain to throne! Refreshed with this, the halting walk and sorrow smiles for joy to come.

Yet so lowly is this plant, so modest in its seeming, that passers by scarce note its place—sometimes mistake it for what it is not—seeking blooms more gaudy or more fragrant to their sense of smell. The child loves best its daisy chain, its buttercups and hairbells; nor wreaths its sunny curls with roses, hollyhocks or peonies. Simple minds in simple things find simple joys. Be thou a child, for roses have their thorns; the gauds of garden yield no balm; seek thou the simple herb whose home is all unlovely to the world. Is thy path smooth to-day? thou shalt not find the bloom, though the plant be rooted at thy feet. To-morrow it may chance, 'mid horrid crag and upland steep thy way may lie, and if thou hast learned to know its leaves to-day, thou mayest find its bloom to-morrow; and, half fainting with thy toils, and bruised and aching, soul and body—'tis then that thou

shalt know its worth. Its grateful green shall chase the ruddy glare of life's brief fever far away; its snowy bloom gives peace.

A thousand legends tell its birth—one may suffice: 'Tis said, The Everlasting to his angel spoke: "Behold how I, 'The All,' am naught to man! I, who am 'Love,' he loves not! I, who am himself, he drags through mire and nails upon the tree of his lusts!" The angel wept the tears of God; for He that is Eternal weeps not, bearing all—knowing the end. And the tears fell to earth all instinct with divinity and from the moistened soil sprang "Patience Sweet"—God's flower in the garden of the soul.

That which shall nerve thine arm to build a Bethel of thy woes is the power to suffer—'tis the shakti which shall breed a new heaven and a new earth. That which shall keep thee scathless from assault on every side; make sure thy going out and coming in, and hold thy feet from stumbling is "patience sweet, which naught can ruffle."

I would fain make thee understand what patience is as I do dream, but know not how to speak. It hath its roots in the certitude of the everhood of Spirit. That which knows Itself as never-ending hurries not nor pulses and frets o'er time misspent. Time belongs to the man of flesh, not the man "who was and is, for whom the hour shall never strike." Whoso knoweth Himself to be "That" wants not patience, for it is Himself.

'Tis our sense of separateness, the delusion that "I am I," which fills us with unrest; which chafes and galls us till we learn this open secret. Why grieve we that our path is long, our progress slow—save that we forget that time hath bounds which enclose us not—save that we fail to grasp our stature, dwarfing ourselves by times' standard. Is not eternity ours? and time hath its bounds.

In thy cycle of need thou art holder of thine own hour-glass and maker and master of time! My brother in darkness, canst thou not learn this lesson of patience, thinking on that infinite "Heart of Love" which, brooding alone in thy inmost being, weeps not, frets not that Its loved one knows not of Its love? The arms of the Infinite are about thee for evermore. Knowing this what reck's it, so thou walkest on, how thy feet may stumble? The Loving Lord has trod the path before—aye, to the bitterest end,

and if thou wilt He will lead thee as the mother her child, patient, tender, full of compassion. And if He be so, take heart of grace and learn to bear with stumbling feet—be patient with thyself. Being led by Love thou shalt learn to fear naught; to fret at nothing, waiting His good time.

Thus shalt Love teach thee for the healing of thy sores that thou mayest walk towards The Light. O. D.

THEOSOPHY.

A WORD possessing greater active potency in the realm of Thought, at the present time, than that at the head of this article, would be hard to find. It is an artisan on the plane of Mind; and what a curious assortment of wares are attributable to its workmanship. The world asks: what is it? Several kinds of replies are given; the Etymological definition, a direct, or an inferential answer. The first is easily understood, and remains uncontroverted; the second involves two divergent sets of ideas, an effect of which is to almost hopelessly puzzle instead of inform the inquirer. One set maintains that certain doctrines—as Karma, Reincarnation, Brotherhood, etc.—are Theosophy; or, rather, Theosophical. The other will not allow that any given doctrine or statement may be authoritatively held to be Theosophy. The third is the answer that one gets by noting the applications that are made of the term in discourse, and in “Theosophical writings.” To many who are really anxious to know about it, that they may seek in it the boon which their nature craves, this tangle of opinions, is, to say the least, rather disheartening; and they wonder if it is anything tangible and definite, or something as unstable as the shifting sands, as uncertain as the location of the “Will-o-the Wisp.” To such a “seeker after Truth” I particularly address myself; without, however, desiring to pose as an authority upon the question raised. This difference of opinion is traceable to the difference in the application of the term, by either party. One dissociates it from all distinctive teachings, and justly holds that whatever is true, is Theosophy; but ages ago certain things were conceived to be true, definite opinions concerning them existed, which were formulated into a system of philosophy. Upon the principle that Truth is characteristic of Divinity, and

error of humanity, they called their system Theosophia in contradistinction to the system of views that were characteristic of the times; and the product of (presumably) human intelligence, in its unexalted state. To maintain that the system referred to is Theosophy, is but reasonable. Whether or not it is a misnomer as applied to that Philosophy, is another matter. It serves (for us) rather to distinguish than to define that system from all others. As to the system itself, there is one little statement that I would like to direct attention to, since it has a most important bearing upon the subject, and appears to be practically neglected. It is, that there was once a *key* to the ancient mysteries or teachings; and that *it has been lost*. The inference is that without this "key," the true conception of what, to them, really constituted "Theosophy," is not to be had.

The student will naturally inquire if that key is extant to-day; and, if so, by whom possessed? The oriental teachings, with which we are just beginning to become familiar, have not been lost, but this key of wonderful properties, which opens to the understanding an august revelation of the achievements of the past, bringing light into darkness, resolving chaos into order, and proving itself to be the veritable image of TRUTH which is reflected by the unsullied, crystal mirror of Reason, no matter in whose personality that mirror is framed, that key, they say, *is lost*. And that which it revealed was what they really and essentially termed Theosophia. I will not enter into the question as to where that key is to be found, or how, or its specific declarations; but one thing more needs to be observed, which will tend to show how such keys are lost. They are and have been lost through the agency of individuals and castes who have attempted to be the recognized mediums for their exposition, without fully comprehending them, or, being led astray by mean considerations, were forced to distort them. The rise of institutions has, in the end, inevitably tended to further this unhappy result. Instead of the institution being and remaining the shrine and safeguard of sublime Truth, and its ritual a laudable attempt to give that gem the finest setting, one that will best exhibit its perfections, it chiefly serves to hide it from the wistful gaze of the way worn pilgrim at its shrouded and dishonored shrine.

CHAS. H. CONNOR.

BEHIND THE VEIL.

A DEPARTMENT FOR THE INVESTIGATION BY THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY OF PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES RELATING TO THE PSYCHIC LIFE.

Experiences and explanation of experiences are invited, but all personal or irrelevant details will be omitted.

MARA writing for "Behind the Veil," in the last number of MERCURY, quotes a most significant passage from "An Authoritative Letter," *i. e.* a Master's letter in S. D., Vol. I. This passage reads, "As globes (speaking of earth chain) they are in *co-adunition but not in consubstantiality* without earth and thus pertain to quite another state of consciousness." Do not these few words furnish the key to many, if not all, the problems concerning globes, chains and individual consciousness?

The word co-adunition is thus defined: "a union of different substances in one mass." Hence, the word as used in the "Letter" clearly indicates the inter-relation of the septenary chain of our planet. These worlds are one as to mass, that is their spheres overlap and interblend so as to form one planetary center of activity just as air, water, fire and earth interblend and are included in that which we know as the world.

Science teaches that our world was originally of sun substance. Now by the help of imagination which is the creative element of the higher reason, let us picture a portion of this sun substance beginning to rotate around some point within itself, as the planet does now. Such rotation would separate the portion from the mass; it would produce a certain individualization. Time began for that self-rotating substance, and time evolved a separation or differentiation in its own substance. Portions differentiated modes and rates of vibration. These differences in the vibratory rate and mode produced difference in substance. Every child knows that difference in rate of vibration, or as we call it, temperature, changes steam into vapor, water, ice. Difference in substance implies difference in all manifestation and in consciousness. To the intelligent beings of any one sphere the beings of other spheres would be non-existent. These spheres differing in substance, in consciousness, in all their putting forth still inter-depend as to mass, they rotate round the same center to which every atom is drawn by the inherent sense of oneness of life-dependence and

this attraction of all matter to its source of being is called gravitation. The instinct of the atom is wiser than our boasted intellectuality for the atom is ever polarized centerwards while material intellect ignores the center.

Thus we can picture spheres within spheres, peopled worlds within other peopled worlds, all rotating round a living center, a sun center, one in essence with all the planetary system. Such is our planet. The great astral ring or sphere with its divisions of Kama Loka, Devachan, etc., the Buddhi-Manasic sphere of Wisdom Light, the Atmic center of Bliss Eternal are all one, they are here, yet separated in consciousness, from one consciousness, as though they were trillions and quadrillions of miles distant from each other and from us.

Yet we may reach them, their wondrous life may be perceived by man, for man is a little planet with many rings or spheres that we call principles. Principles and spheres correspond. Through consciousness man can reach these more ethereal spheres, yea, he can come unto the very centre. Philosophy demonstrates that a state of consciousness pre-supposes a corresponding state of being or conversely, that a state of being pre-supposes a corresponding state of consciousness, thus affirming from the intellectual point of view the occult teaching that man and nature, the microcosmic and the macrocosmic, evolve together and are correlates one of another.

It follows, then, that as these spheres co-exist and are in co-adunition, that as the seven principles also co-exist and are in co-adunition in each human being, that, as these human principles are correlated with the earth-chain of spheres, it is possible to come into touch with any one of these spheres by living in the consciousness of its correlated principle or plane. One must think oneself in that sphere. The S. D., Vol. II, page 59, says, "The thinking of oneself as this, that or the other, is the chief factor in the production of every kind of psychic or even physical phenomena."

But in order to think oneself into a wider sphere than that of material consciousness it is necessary to learn how to control mental processes, to understand the complex self, to be able to think beyond the delusions of separateness, such as time, distance, the

above, the below, mine and thine. Aspiration alone is *not* sufficient; there must be earnest effort, persistent will, and—a guide. Above all else, the wakening inner perception of the New People should be turned towards the inner sphere which is the beginning and the end, the center without which the physical world would not exist.

Let us learn wisdom from the atom and gravitate centerwards.

L. W. HERMSGYN.

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY.

THIS DEPARTMENT IS INTENDED TO BE ONE OF ACTUAL EXPERIENCE. ANY ITEMS SHOWING THE AID THEOSOPHY GIVES IN DAILY LIFE WILL BE WELCOME.

PRACTICAL Theosophy must mean the application of the principles, the ideals, the knowledge of Theosophia to the needs of daily life. Practical Theosophy is certainly not limited to morality; if it were it would be superfluous, for Christianity has taught (I would say practiced) the highest morality for 1800 years. In fact, every religious system teaches honesty, kindliness, truth, love, purity; the Golden Rule has been inculcated by every great teacher; still, the world is sunken deep in misery, crime and degradation. Disease and suffering afflict the greater part of humanity. It is evident, then, that the teaching of morality and doctrine is not the lever that will uplift society and free the world from the evils that make it a Hades instead of Paradise. There must be something more than ethics, something more than abstract doctrines, and this something more Theosophy should give. What is this powerful plus, this actinic ray that alone can quicken into life the moral sense of the people, that will destroy evil, that will reform the home, the school, the mart, the government, the church; that will create a new art—the art of true living, of healthy, happy, beautiful living? Is it not knowledge of those hidden forces, those creative processes that mould and build all external forms? And this knowledge must not remain a mere knowing, it must be made experience. Spiritual knowledge and spiritual culture are the two requisites. Philosophy becomes art, and art builds worlds. We are too apt to separate our spiritual knowledge and aspirations from the commonplaces of everyday life, as if the latter were too earthy, too insignificant for interblending with

the spiritual. Yet earth-life, every phase of it, however mean, is the result of causes reaching into the spiritual and if we wish to change the results we must go back to those causes.

There is no knowledge so sacred, no love so sublime that it may not be applied to our everyday work. The ancients were wiser than we, for they applied their highest wisdom to the tilling of the soil, seed-sowing and harvesting, that which we designate as farm work. Work that our pride has termed ignoble, aye, even stone-breaking or dish washing, would appear most noble if we related it to spiritual realms, applied to it spiritual laws; if we once saw it with eyes made clear by spiritual insight. Work must be ennobled ere the world be reformed. Not the making of money, not the writing of useless or evil books but good, honest work for the better building and preserving of the world. And to do this work as Theosophists we must bring to it a truer knowledge, a greater power, a clearer insight, as well as a purer motive. The laws that we apply to the building of character, to the attainment of soul happiness, we must also apply to world building, to home building, to the attainment of order, health, beauty, happiness in the world around us.

Such is Practical, or applied, Theosophy—the overcoming of ill through knowledge quickened by love. ED.

There is a relation between the hours of our life and the centuries of time. As the air I breathe is drawn from the great repositories of nature, as the light on my book is yielded by a star a hundred millions of miles distant, as the poise of my body depends on the equilibrium of centrifugal and centripetal forces, so the hours should be instructed by the ages and the ages explained by the hours. Of the universal mind each individual man is one more incarnation. All its properties consist in him.

—Emerson.

“A star is beautiful; it affords pleasure, not from what it is to do, or to give, but simply by being what it is. It befits the heavens; it has congruity with the mighty space in which it dwells. It has repose; no force disturbs its eternal peace. It has freedom; no obstruction lies between it and infinity.”

AROUND THE ZODIAC.

Aries—the Ram.

MARCH 21ST TO APRIL 22D.

THE sun radiates upon the earth that force of which Aries is typical. This sign symbolizes the forceful energy, the pushing quality, the fire, so to speak, of the seed. It is the first out-breathing of Brahm, the beginning of a new period of activity. It is the One—The Creative Brahma—that motion, which, according to the Rig-Veda, caused—

“The germ that still lay covered with the husk,
(To) Burst forth, one nature, from the fervent heat.”

Aries, as the head of the Celestial Man, rules the brain of the physical man. It is the house of Mars. Its gem is the Amythist—according to some, the Ruby. Its plants are those of a pungent nature, as mustard, onions, pepper; those of a prickly kind, such as the holly, the thistle. The red poppy is also sacred to it. It rules brimstone, firestone, and similar stones.

“He who never relaxes into sportiveness is a wearisome companion, but beware of him who jests at everything. Such men disparage by some ludicrous association all objects which are presented to their thoughts, and thereby render themselves incapable of any emotion which can either elevate or soften them. They bring upon their moral being an influence more withering than the blasts of the deserts.”

“Nothing is impossible; there are ways that lead to everything; and if we had sufficient will, we should always have sufficient means.”

“Humanity is the heart, and justice the path of man. He knoweth heaven who develops his higher nature.”

“Generosity does not consist in giving, but in making sacrifices in order that you may be able to give.”

“A beneficent person is like a fountain, watering the earth and spreading fertility.”

T. S. ECHOES.

English Letter.

Dear Editor :—The principal activity to be noted since our last letter is the starting of two series of weekly afternoon meetings in London. Two members have kindly lent their drawing rooms for this purpose, and much interest has been aroused in quite new circles. Mr. Mead and Mr. Leadbeater take alternate meetings of one series, and Mr. Bertram Keightley, who is again in England, takes the other set. He is also going to conduct a third set of afternoon meetings which has only just been arranged. It is satisfactory to know that there is not one day of the week on which Theosophy is not directly spoken of in London and more often it is twice a day. In addition to this Mr. Mead is giving a series of six lectures at the Pioneer Club, on "The Lives and Teachings of the Later Platonists." The Club is one of the leading ladies' clubs in London and the first lecture which has just taken place was a great success. The following is the syllabus of the course: "The Lives and Teachings of the Later Platonists." A course of six lectures will be given on the above subject at the Pioneer Club, 22 Bruton Street, Berkeley Square, W., on Friday afternoons, from 5:30 to 6:30, by Mr. G. R. S. Mead, B. A., M. R. A. S. Feb. 14, Alexandria and her Schools; Feb. 21, Plotinus, the Saint; Porphyry, the Philosopher; "Ecstasis;" Feb. 28, Jamblichus; "On the Mysteries;" "Theurgy;" Mar. 5, Julian, the Emperor-Philosopher; and his Teachers; Mar. 13, Sosipatra, the Seeress; Hypatia, the Orator; and the Women Disciples; Mar. 20, Proclus, the World-Priest; the Conclusion of the Whole Matter.

Another plan of work has just been started and it is hoped it may be useful, is an exchange of lectures. New lodges and centres will be helped by others in this manner as well as the older lodges, whose members are too busy to devote much time to preparing papers. Any member having a lecture suitable for lodge work or public propaganda is asked to send it to European Section office; a list of the subjects of the lectures will be inserted in the "Vahan" from time to time so that the lodges and centres may have their choice of the lectures. The Thursday meetings of the Blavatsky Lodge have been remarkably well attended. Mr. Scott Elliott gave a paper of remarkable interest, on "Recent Investigations Concerning Atlantis;" it will shortly be published as a transaction of the London Lodge, and it should be read by all students.

Mr. Leadbeater has made a tour recently, in the southwest of England visiting the lodges and centres. Mrs. Besant awakened much interest in Theosophy in several of the west of England towns last autumn, and since

that time many meetings have been held, and it is to consolidate the work then begun that Mr. Leadbeater has now re-visited the same places.

Good accounts come from Mrs. Besant, who is making an extensive lecturing tour in parts of India which she has not previously visited.

The translation of the six Upanishads intended to be the first volume of the series is now complete and will have been published before this letter reaches you. The six Upanishads are the Isha, Keva, Katha, Prashna, Mundaka and Mandukya. Mr. Mead has had the assistance of I. C. Chattopadhyaya in his work, and he has written an introduction to each Upanishad. The price, 6d a volume, will enable every member to possess a copy, and all students will value this addition to Theosophical literature. Hitherto the cost of these works has put them beyond the reach of the poorer members.

L. M. COOPER.

Activities.

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND, January 22.

At the beginning of the festival season, the local branch practically shut shop, and took a three weeks relaxation from the ordinary duties of the lodge. The holidays have expired, and all the functions of the lodge are again in full swing. On Sunday evening, January 5, Mrs. Draffin lectured on "Revolution in Orthodoxy, and Peace on Earth and Good Will to all Men." On January 17, at the open lodge meeting, C. W. Sanders read a paper on "Thought, Thought-forms and Karma." On Sunday evening, January 19, Mrs. Draffin lectured on "Brotherhood and the Service of Man." Miss L. Edgar, M. A., the president of the local lodge, is at present on a trip through the southern portions of the colony, and is visiting all the branches and the several isolated members.

Theosophical Society.

AMERICAN SECTION.

TENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION.

By provision of our Constitution the Annual Convention of the American Section T. S., is held on the fourth Sunday in April and at such place as the Executive Committee may determine. The determination has been Chicago for this year, so that the tenth Annual Convention will meet on April 24th, 1896, at the Headquarters, 26 Van Buren St., Chicago, Ill., at 10 A. M.

The Secretaries of Branches are requested to send to the General Secretary, Mr. Alexander Fullerton at 108 East 17th St., New York City, by April 1st, a brief statement of the activities of the Branch during the year, its contents to be modelled upon the "Abstracts of Reports from Branches," as printed in each Report of Proceedings prior to 1895.

Ceylon Letter.

The receipt of the *MERCURY* is looked forward to by every one of us here. Its reading is much enjoyed. I am happy to announce the safe arrival of Mrs. Elise Pickett from Australia. She has joined Mrs. Higgins in the educational work of Ceylon, at the Musaeus School and Orphanage. This most useful institution is doing a noble work among the poor neglected girls of Ceylon. I appeal for the moral and material aid of all readers of *MERCURY*, on behalf of this institution. The Hope Lodge has elected Mrs. Pickett as its President. Open meetings of the Lodge are held twice a week. Although its number of members is small, these students are devoted and earnest workers.

We have made arrangements to publish a small monthly entitled "The Rays of Light." Its first number will be issued in March, and we invite the co-operation and sympathy of all our friends, to insure its success.

Mrs. Annie Besant is now at Calcutta. The Colonel has left Adyar to join her there and go on a lecturing tour in North India. Mrs. Besant will, probably, be leaving for Europe in March.

CHIPS.

The Theosophical Outlook.

"The year that has passed has been one of cloud and storm, of grave anxiety and even of apprehension among those who had not realized the foundation upon which Theosophy is built—the Forces which supply it with vitality and strength. But, thanks to the courage, constancy and patient steadfastness of many, whose names live in the heart of every true Theosophist, the clouds have been dispersed, the anxiety has been allayed, and the new year dawns calm and peaceful upon us."

"It is but natural that our eyes should turn first to India, whence came the spiritual seed of the Society, whither the germ was transplanted in its budding infancy, whence it has ramified over the face of the globe, and where its founders sought rest and a centre of organization beside the pleasant waters of the river Adyar. In this quiet retreat was held, but a few weeks ago, the twentieth anniversary of the T. S., and one who was present writes to me of the harmony which prevailed, of the cordial and brotherly feeling made manifest, of the disappearance of all causes of discord."

The President, in his annual address, speaking of his first journey from New York to India with H. P. B., seventeen years ago, says:—"The stormy seas we had to traverse in reaching our objective point were typical of the moral conflicts through which our future stretched, and as, after all, we came safely through, so has our bark weathered every gale dur-

ing these twenty years and proved herself staunch and strong in every emergency. Some of our companies have deserted, some sail under another flag, some have tried to destroy our ship; *but still she rides the sea of modern thought fit for another twenty years of useful service.*"

Mr. Bertram Keightley, General Secretary of the Indian Section, speaking on the same occasion, says:—"We have stronger and more solid ground for hope than ever before. Not only has our Society emerged safe and vigorous from two years of constant and most searching trial, but its real inner vitality is stronger now than ever before. * * * And there is a steady growth in the number of members now in our ranks who *know* the reality of the spiritual life and the truth of Theosophy from their own personal direct experience. It is these who form the real living centre of our organization, and so long as that centre grows steadily and healthily, so long will attacks and onslaughts be powerless to harm our Society permanently. Therefore I look forward to the future with the utmost confidence. Storms we shall inevitably encounter; trials, struggles, opposition are integral elements in our growth, and without them no growth could take place at all; friends and companions will drop by the way or leave us, under the blinding powers of illusion; but of this be sure, the T. S. will live on, growing ever stronger and containing within its circle an ever increasing number of men and women who have won their way from faith to knowledge, whose feet are set firm upon the rungs of the ladder of life, whose hearts are purified from self seeking and full of love for all who need their help."

Turning from the East to the West, there are many correspondents who write to the editor, and all speak words of cheer. One, whose name will be familiar to most of our readers—Mrs. Cooper-Oatley—writes: "All is well and peaceful and very different to this time last year. Meetings here are very well attended and in every way a steady progress is visible. I am sure that a few months of this will make an enormous difference in the spread of Theosophy. New workers of a better type are coming in, and the Lodge is in a bright, harmonious, and flourishing condition. Moreover, we are starting some new weekly meetings in the West End." Another correspondent writes: "All is activity and all seems peace at present." Mr. Mead says: "We have reached bed-rock at last, after years of waiting, and things look smooth ahead within. So we are all very happy, and contented, and confident."

But Mrs. Besant's words, at the Indian Convention, are the weightiest and fullest of detail: "Coming to you from England," she says, "I am able to report to you that these great principles are spreading as they should spread, especially among the thoughtful and educated classes—

spreading among those whose words influence the public mind, whose thought reaches the public brain, and we find, as the months and years go over our heads, that we have won to our side many valuable recruits. And not only that one after another joins openly, making themselves part of the Theosophical Society, but the teaching spreads much further than the Society extends, and is permeating the whole of our literature and public and religious life, and influences thought to an extent very much greater than the mere limits of the Society itself. For when you see—as we saw in England last summer—one of the Canons of the Church Establishment publicly preaching the doctrine of reincarnation, we begin to understand that some result of the work is coming, and some influence of the divine wisdom is making itself felt. You may take up magazine after magazine and you will find the great doctrine of reincarnation no longer a thing to be jeered at, no longer a suggestion to be scoffed at, but though men do not accept it, they treat it respectfully and deal with it by way of argument and not by way of ridicule, as they did but a few years ago. You find the idea of *Karma*, or the law of cause and effect, which links life with life, the past with the present, the present with the future—you find this great principle making its way so that the very word is now a common word on the lips of the public speakers and writers. You find many of their arguments are drawn from the Theosophical Society's literature, arguments as to the immortality of the soul, as to the reality of the knowledge of the unseen world, which twenty years ago would have been impossible and would have aroused challenge on every side, so that not only among members of our Society do we number some Christian clergymen who have learned the deeper truths underlying Christian dogma and spiritual verities that mere outer forms have sometimes concealed rather than expressed, not only do we see some joining the Society, but we see from our literature that a very large number are studying our books, and, without using the name of Theosophy at all, are becoming permeated with its ideas and are beginning to teach it to their congregation."

—*Theosophy in Australasia.*

BOOK REVIEWS.

THE THEOSOPHIST for February, Chap. xvii, "Oriental Series of Old Diary Leaves," "Atlantis and the Saragossa Sea" is an interesting paper of an actual experience. The first installment of an article of "Psychism and Spirituality," by Francesca Arundale. "Fire-Treading Festival" recalls the old ordeals by fire. "A Change of Personality" translated from the French of Colonel de Rochas is concluded. "The Complexities of Karmic Law" is a commentary on the Puranus. "A Scientific Explanation of

Purity of Thoughts, Words and Deeds as Taught by Zoroaster" (continued) shows the power of sound and consequently of words. "The origin or root of sound of words is in the plane of thought, the astral plane or Akasa." "Not only can sound build, but it can also destroy."

LUCIFER for February. Mr. Mead, in the "Watch Tower," gives some timely suggestions to those who weave fanciful stories of Reincarnation. We quote: "Let us hope that the time is not far distant when the 'Seers of the Truth' shall apply their seeing to humanity as it is in the body, tell us of men as men, and not of the hosts of gods and spirits and incarnate entities which their several theologies clothe in their several motley." "Orpheus" treats of Minerva, Apollo, etc., the Cyclops, Carybantes and Mysteries of Symbolism. "Devachan" by Mr. Leadbeater, (continued) describes the condition of human consciousness when raised to the Devachanic plane. "Seven-fold Universe," by T. Williams. Recurrent Questions treat of the Nebular Hypothesis and the fate of those souls who, at the end of the manyantara, shall not have attained self-consciousness. "Man and His Bodies," by Mrs. Besant clears up most explicitly the confusion that has existed in regard to the Linga Sharira and the Astral Body. "The Bhagavad Gita," by J. C. Chattapadhaya. "The Baron's Room," is a weird nightmare story.

LE LOTUS BLEU, January. This number begins with an exposition of Theosophy under title "Theosophy and the Theosophical Society." We quote "*Purification, Knowledge, Altruism and Meditation* are the terms of the formula which synthesizes Theosophical teachings.

"A Case of Changed Personality" gives some interesting hypnotic experiments of a very high order by which the personal self of a hypnotized subject was detached from its physical vehicle and its Linga Sharira. The soulless form is taken possession of by an ego differing in every particular from the subject,

Dr. Pascal treats of Vampires, Possession and Homunculi in his article on Kama Manasic Elementals which ends in this number. He says: "The guardian deities of villages, families, countries are generally Kama Manasic Elementals evolved by a magician or by a powerful mental chain." "Man and the Sphinx" appeals to the Mystic. Occult varieties gives an authenticated account of the forcible externalization of the double of a living person.

A SCIENTIFIC DEMONSTRATION OF THE FUTURE LIFE. By Thomson Jay Hudson, author of "The Law of Psychic Phenomena." A. C. McClurg and Co., Chicago.

Starting with the propositions—"that anything which man desires to

know is a legitimate subject of scientific investigation," and that "a psychic fact is just as much a fact as a granite mountain," the writer of this unique inquiry attempts to prove the reality of a life beyond the grave by strictly inductive methods of investigation. He first sweeps away, with the broom of keen analysis, the ancient arguments for immortality, such as, analogy, authority, philosophical speculation and instinctive desire. In this process he pays tribute to the "intuitive recognition of truth" in Emerson and Plato, asserts to the former's assertion that "We cannot prove our faith by syllogisms," and straightway proceeds to devote 326 pages to an attempt to do so. He acknowledges that the "doctrine of reincarnation is rapidly gaining a foothold in the Western world," but wittily draws the conclusions from the testimony of personal reminiscence that—"no common man is ever reincarnated, and that the capacity of great men for minute subdivision is illimitable," (p. 47.)

The first evidence lies in the facts of spiritism and hypnotism. The author accounts for all the phenomena of the former by the hypothesis "that they are produced by the exercise of powers inherent in the living man," and affirms; "a future life for man is not demonstrated by showing that spirits communicate with the living," (p. 56.) An interesting review of the fact that hypnotic subjects reproduce all the phenomena of spiritism upholds his reference of all manifestations of an apparently extraneous intelligence to the action of the laws of telepathy and suggestion. This latter was noted by Paracelsus in the sixteenth century, but only formulated in recent years by Liebault. His arguments tend to prove that the psychic, as he calls the medium, is under the control of the subjective mind in the abnormal state of trance, and is then influenced by latent ideas in the subjective minds of companions and his own previous objective thoughts. "Telepathy, the means of communication between subjective minds," (p. 68.) he states is "a scientifically demonstrated law of Nature," but clairvoyance as still unproven.

Mr. Hudson's clever explanation of modern phenomena is next applied to the misty atmosphere of miracle and prophecy in the Bible, though thinkers may be slow to acknowledge that "every religion worthy of the name has its origin in psychic phenomena," (p. 157.) After comparing the visible phenomena of the priests of Israel to the performances of the adepts of the Orient, we read, "The salient feature of the psychic career of Moses consists in his supposed communion with God," (p. 121.) On the ground that he and the other Hebrew prophets were psychics experiencing the condition of ecstasy, he declares, "He (Moses) subjectively saw the vision of the burning bush, and he subjectively (clair-audiently) heard the voice. His education and habit of thought produced an auto-suggestion that it was the voice of God; and, true to the universal law of suggestion,

it assumed to be the voice of God," (p. 123.) This mistake of Moses mitigates the jealous, changeable and intensely human character displayed in the utterances of Jehovah, and it is balm to a shocked ideal to accept the quoted explanation of Maimonides, the great Jewish philosopher of the twelfth century. "It was objective Moses talking with subjective Moses," (p. 130.)

The idea that the only true God presided over their particular tribe was transmitted through generations of the Jews, and was, therefore, the dominant suggestion when any prophet entered the psychic state. Hence the prefix "Thus saith the Lord," when these subjective communications were uttered. "It will thus be seen that the monotheistic idea was inherent in the very nature of the psychic phenomena experienced by the seers and prophets of the Jewish race," (p. 141.) This evolution of the religious ideal culminated in Jesus and his grand and lofty conception of God was not evolved after the psychic "manner of the prophets, but was the result of the fact that he was endowed with the faculty of intuitive perception of the laws of the human soul," (p. 146.) Mr. Hudson avers that his physical manifestations were strictly according to laws which are beginning to be understood, as Jesus himself taught, and that, while ordinary psychics must be dominated by the subjective mind, Jesus exhibited a persistent synchronous action of the objective and subjective faculties, a condition rarely manifested intellectually, by men of genius.

The psychological theory deduced from carefully-gathered psychic evidence, linked by long chains of logical argument, was given out three years ago in the interesting work, "The Law of Psychic Phenomena."

Mr. Hudson splits man's mind in two, like a peach, and names one hemisphere the objective, and the other, the subjective mind. The former is pure intellect, the cold, deliberate, reasoning function of the physical brain, and dies with the body; while every remaining faculty of man as a feeling, psychic, or spiritual being, is included in the latter term for a conglomerate soul. That grave contradictions must arise in this wholesale human symposium, which he calls "in reality the mind of a distinct entity," (p. 227) is apparent from the table of its attributes, as follows:

- "1. It is constantly amenable to control by suggestion.
2. It is incapable of reasoning by the processes of induction.
3. Its power to reason deductively from given premises is practically perfect.
4. It is endowed with a perfect memory.
5. It is the seat of the emotions.
6. It possesses the power to move ponderable objects without physical contact. (Which Prof. Cones calls Telekinesis.)
7. It has the power to receive intelligence by telepathy.

8. Its activity is in inverse proportion to the health and vigor of the physical organism.

9. It has the faculties of instinct and intuition, and, the power of intuitive perception of the laws of Nature," (p. 226.)

The necessity for this hypothesis of the dual mind, and its harmony with the principles of evolution are elaborated in lengthy inductive arguments. Premising the broad axiom that "there is no faculty, emotion or organism of the human mind that has not its function, use, or object," and that the functions of the subjective mind have no normal uses in a purely physical existence, he rests his case on the conclusion that there must be a future life in which these subjective qualities can operate.

Minor errors demonstrate that logic can span a gulf of error as easily as unite truths. The greatest mistake in the book is locating the passional nature or Kama principle in the subjective mind, or undifferentiated soul. He considers the only normal functions of the latter in this life to be the instincts of Self-preservation, Reproduction and Preservation of offspring, (p. 262.) Hammond's medical statistics of brainless monstrosities suggest the spinal cord and Pons Varolii as organs for such manifestations of the subjective mind as could be easily accounted for by inherent consciousness in human atoms.

A similar statement is, that the "control of the objective by the subjective mind constitutes insanity, and is the source of all vice and immorality," (p. 215.) While warnings of the danger to health and morals from psychic indulgence uncontrolled by the Will are valuable, the above instances evince the anachronism of identifying the low, bestial propensities of man with "that noble faculty of intuitive cognition of Nature's laws which transcends the power of induction as Omniscience transcends the powers of sense, and whose possession by the human soul demonstrates its kinship to God," (p. 272.) On the score of definiteness there might be an advantage in his own account of "the Hindu philosophy, which constructs man in sections, puts him together like a telescope, and assigns him the task of shedding one section at a time until there is nothing left but 'pure spirit,' " (p. 200)

For the sake of the watch-fires of living truth that light up this mountain of intellectual syllogisms that vainly seek to confine man's complex spiritual nature, the modern scientific attitude towards the hoary Eastern wisdom must be condoned as the opinion of a beetle crawling industriously on the ground about the eagle soaring near the sun. E. S.

THE ARYA BALA BODHINI in "Notes and Comments" reviews its first year which has been most successful. "Rebirth" is a commentary on sec-

ond book of the Bhagavad Gita. "Mrs. Besant in Bombay," gives an inter-view with A. B., of great interest. "Some Mahatmas of Southern India" is an account of the "Swami of Nagal."

THE MORNING STAR, Lonsville, Ga. "A Strange Masonic Lodge" relates the prophecy of Cagliostro in regard to Louis XVI. "A Few Paragraphs from Paracelsus" gives the views of that great occultist on the Spiritual Essence and Soul Essence of man.

THE OCCULT REVIEW, Boston, has an able article on "The Duality of Man's Nature and Consciousness According to Oliver Wendell Holmes, De Maistre and Others." "The Theosophical Basis of Astrology, by Alan Leo, is continued.

NOTES AND QUERIES discusses the "Corpuscular and Undulatory Theories," and "The Future of the Islam."

Notice.

The third volume of the Secret Doctrine, written by Madame Blavatsky, and carefully edited, indexed and arranged by Annie Besant and G. R. S. Mead, is now ready for the press, and will be published simultaneously in London and Chicago, White Lotus Day, May 8th, 1896.

"Until the rubbish of the ages is cleared away from the minds of the Theosophists, to whom these pages are dedicated, it is impossible that the more practical teaching contained in the THIRD Volume should be understood. Consequently, it entirely depends upon the reception with which volumes one and two shall meet at the hands of Theosophists and Mystics, whether the last volume will ever be published." (Secret Doctrine, Vol. 2, page 842.)

The exclusive right of publication in the United States is vested in the Theosophical Book Concern of Chicago.

In form and binding the third volume will be a duplicate of the first and second volumes of the American edition of 1893. The price is \$5.00 net. A reduction will be made to immediate subscribers, and subscriptions accompanied by \$4.00 will be received up to April 1st. After that date only the regular price will be accepted. Books will be sent by express, charges unpaid, except when 25 cents additional is sent with subscription to cover postage. Send subscriptions and make all checks and money orders payable to the

THEOSOPHICAL BOOK CONCERN,

Room 426.

26 Van Buren St., Chicago.

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER.

[This Department will be devoted exclusively to children ; questions and answers from Lotus Circles on Theosophical Subjects are invited and will receive special attention.]

A FLOWER.

IN Eastern homes during the long cold winters of ice and snow, when all the trees and shrubs are destitute of foliage and the eye can behold nothing green out of doors, the people place in their windows, potted plants to enliven their rooms.

One winter in my home, we planted a hyacinth bulb and placed it in the window to grow. After a few weeks, a green shoot appeared above the soil, it reached to a certain height and then apparently stood still for several days. Upon a closer examination, the shoot was found to be bent, its head buried in the soil. We carefully removed the same, and when near the bottom of the pot, we found a pure white blossom which sprung up as the weight of the soil was removed from it, and, as if rejoicing in its freedom, it sent forth a perfume which filled the room. The bulb had been planted in an inverted position, or, as children say, "bottom side up," and in its struggle for light had turned upon its side, but still had been putting forth its energies towards the perfect flower.

That struggling flower taught us many things. Perhaps, the little friends who read MERCURY may glean some good idea from it. If they do, I, for one, would like to know what it is ;so please write your thoughts about the hyacinth and let us read them in the pages of MERCURY. In that way we can help one another by exchanging thoughts.

PL. G.

AIDS.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN FEBRUARY NUMBER.

24.—The immortality of the soul can not be proven in the sense of material proof or a mathematical demonstration, but the fact that substance, or matter, is indestructible, as we learn in our text books of physics, is a logical proof. As nothing is destroyed, therefore soul, which is true substance, cannot be destroyed; its transient forms change but itself lives for all time.

25.—Yes, the superstition in regard to gems is based on the

fact that all forms, whether vegetable, animal, or of the mineral kingdom, are children, so to speak, of the Forces that build the world—Forces akin to the principles of which we are composed. When we surround ourselves with certain flowers, stones or animals we give ourselves an atmosphere of the Forces to which these flowers, gems, etc., are akin. The same may be said of what we eat. But ignorance changed this beautiful idea into a superstition centered upon a few favorite gems.

26.—A realization of the karmic law, which makes each one responsible for his every thought, is the foundation of right living. Reincarnation is a factor of this karmic law. Karma and Reincarnation cannot be separated.

27.—The Kali Yug is a Sanskrit name for the Iron Age, an age of ignorance of spiritual things, an age of greed, of selfishness, of injustice. This age is said to have begun with Krishna's death, that is, when the evil of separateness killed the Christ Principles. In our Scriptures the killing of Abel by Cain begins the Kali Yug. A great cycle of this Iron Age ends next year, 1897.

NEW QUESTIONS.

28.—Can you give me the History and Symbology of the Lotus flower?

29.—Is real happiness a condition of the mind?

30.—What is the distinction, if any, between Instinct and Intuition?

31.—We are told it is wrong to take life, how, then, should one deal with noxious and poisonous insects and reptiles?

“The jealous man is not angry if you dislike another, but if you find those faults which are in his own character, you discover not only your dislike of another, but of himself.”

“That which we lose will come not back again without some struggle and perchance some pain. That which we lack, by art we must attain.”

“Skepticism is the highest of duties, and blind faith the one unpardonable sin.”

“The best method of preserving our faculties is to use them.”